

On Monday, April 9, 2007, Congressman Bishop delivered the following remarks at a Send-Off ceremony for the 1230th Transportation Unit, Army National Guard:

Good morning.

As a member of Congress, I am often given invitations to all kinds of events – meeting and speaking to Presidents, Governors, kings and other titled dignitaries. But I can assure you that of all the events duty calls me to attend none is so awesome and none so solemn as being here today to express the gratitude of your families, your friends, your neighbors and indeed the people of our nation for you brave, honorable and unselfish service.

We live in the greatest country on the face of the earth. We enjoy life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness each and every day in ways that those in other countries can only dream of.

But freedom is not free! The War on Terror and the commitment of our country to a safer, more peaceful world demands a price in service and sacrifice.

And today, you, the men and women of the 1230th Transportation Company, U.S. Army National Guard who come from every corner of this state – are stepping forward, leaving the comforts of home and the security of family, to pay that price and answer the call to duty.

You show what true patriotism is!

The days ahead will not be easy. Uncertainty, danger and great challenges will undoubtedly come.

But please know that as you go and as you serve, we back at home will our utmost to give you all the support that you need.

The Congress will provide every dollar, every dime and every penny for the equipment, the personnel, the training, and the weapons to support you mission and keep you safe.

On your return we will honor your service with full military and veterans' benefits.

And while you are serving, rest assured that we will have your back here at home by supporting your families in any way that they might need.

You, the men and women of the 1230th are among the best, the brightest, the most creative and the most courageous that our country has to offer. The faithful performance of your mission can make a difference in ending sectarian strife, advancing freedom and spreading democracy.

History will remember your service. Years from now your children and grandchildren will be taught of this time and your commitment to bringing peace to a violent world.

They will learn of your love for this country, your bravery and the values we all share.

And someday, God willing, they will see a peaceful Middle East, defined by democracy and opportunity and they will know that it was your service that made it so.

Today, I thank you for your service. I thank your families for allowing you to serve. I pray fervently for your safety, the success of your mission and above all, for peace.

I await the day when we can all welcome you back to Georgia and the country that loves you.

God Bless You! God keep you – until we meet again on your safe arrival back home.